

IDEAS & ISSUES (SECURITY COOPERATION)

# Through the Lens of Security Cooperation

Strategic, defense, and military guidance  
by David A. Williams & LtCol Chris Jackson

**T**his article is the second in a series of articles on security cooperation (SC) principles, activities, and planning by the staff of the SC Education and Training Center (SCETC), Training and Education Command (TECom). This and subsequent articles focus on how SC "operationalizes" the Guidance for Employment of the Force (GEF) and SC's role in the shift from "contingency-centric" to "strategy-centric" planning.

What are the strategic, defense, and military documents that provide guidance to ensure U.S. national security and defense? Do the documents share threads in the "ways" to achieve national objectives? Is there a common "means" to execute tasks contained in these documents? What is the significance of these ways and means? The purpose of this article is to answer these questions by presenting elements of selected strategic, military, maritime, and Marine Corps planning documents through the lens of SC. For clarity, SC is defined as:

All Department of Defense [DoD] interactions with foreign defense establishments to build defense relationships that promote specific US security interests, develop allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, and provide US forces with peacetime and contingency access to a host nation.<sup>1</sup> (See Figure 1.)

At the strategic level, the *National Security Strategy (NSS)*, *Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR)* Report, *National Defense Strategy (NDS)*, and *National Military Strategy (NMS)* share themes

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in the approaches to secure American interests and achieve respective strategic objectives: engagement and partnerships. The 2010 NSS, the President's guidance on national security, identifies "Pursuing Comprehensive Engagement" as one of the four elements of the U.S. approach to national security.<sup>2</sup> Themes within the 2010 QDR, which sets a long-term course for the DoD, include "Rebalancing the Force" (building the security capacity of partner states), "Strengthening Relationships" (strengthening key relationships abroad), and "Reforming How We Do Business" (reforming security assistance).<sup>3</sup> The 2008 NDS outlines how the DoD will con-

gration (with partners abroad).<sup>5</sup> Strategic guidance calls upon the government and DoD to engage and build partnerships to secure U.S. interests and achieve strategic objectives. SC is a means to accomplish these objectives.

At the military (defense) level, the GEF, *Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP)*, and *Defense Planning and Programming Guidance (DPPG)* are unified in the ways to achieve national security and defense objectives: strategy-centric planning, steady-state shaping, and building partnerships. The GEF translates strategic objectives and strategy into DoD priorities and comprehensive planning direc-

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## What are the strategic, defense, and military documents that provide guidance to ensure U.S. national security and defense?

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tribute to achieving NSS objectives. It states that the DoD will strengthen and expand alliances and partnerships, and integrate and unify our efforts with partners, allies, and international and multilateral organizations.<sup>4</sup> One of the three principles of the NMS, which sets the strategic direction of the Armed Forces to support the NSS and NDS, is inte-

tion. It directs combatant commanders (CCDRs) to focus functional and theater strategies on steady-state, foundational activities (e.g., SC) to shape the overseas environment for stability and set the conditions for success if contingency operations are necessary. Contingency plans, which in times past were the de facto focus

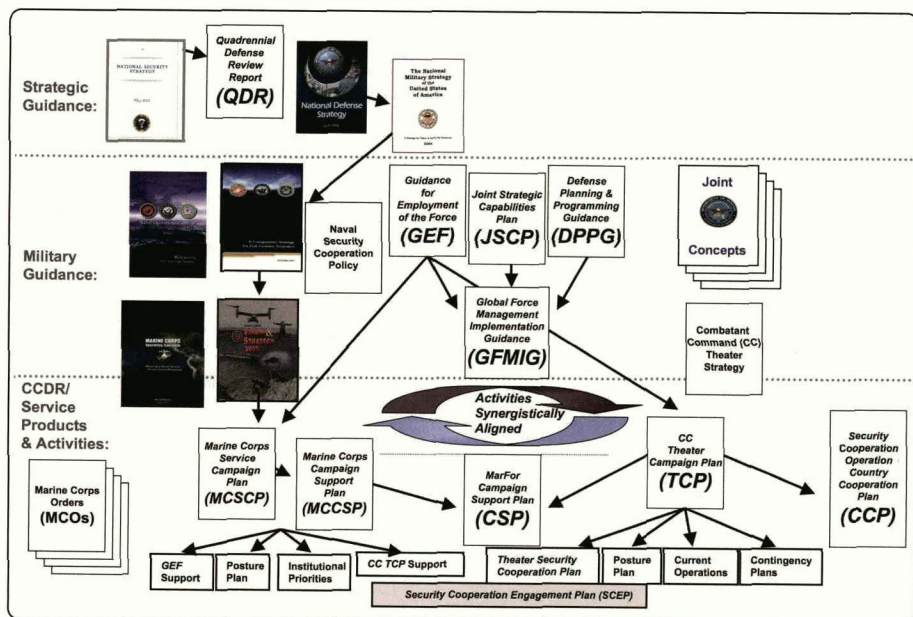


Figure 1. Planning guidance.

of geographic combatant commands (GCCs), are defined as branches to the GCC's theater strategy and theater campaign plan (TCP).<sup>6</sup> The JSCP provides guidance to CCDRs, Service chiefs, and senior DoD leaders to accomplish tasks and missions based on near-term capabilities. It provides guidance for steady-state activities (e.g., SC) to implement campaign plans and campaign support, contingency and posture plans.<sup>7</sup> The DPPG translates the NDS into force development priorities for the QDR-described 20-year planning period. It includes the "building partnerships joint capability area" as a DoD priority.<sup>8</sup> Military planning guidance directs strategy-centric planning, steady-state shaping, and building partnerships as ways to attain security and defense objectives. SC is a tool at the DoD's disposal.

At the maritime (military department) level, *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower (CS-21)* and the *Naval Operations Concept (NOC)* share common threads to achieve security, defense, military, and maritime objectives: engagement and cooperative relationships. CS-21, the first unified Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard maritime strategy, identifies "foster and sustain cooperative relationships with more international partners" as one of the six strategic imperatives of the Naval Services.<sup>9</sup> The NOC, which describes the ways with which the sea Services will achieve the ends articulated in CS-21, explains how core capabilities, such as forward presence, enable the Naval Services to build partner capacity and how, with maritime security, naval forces partner with others for homeland defense indepth. The maritime Services shall engage and

form cooperative relationships with international partners to accomplish respective tasks. SC is an instrument to execute maritime tasks.

At the Marine Corps (Service) level, the *Marine Corps Mission and Strategy 2025 (MCMS 2025)*, *Marine Corps Operating Concepts (MOC)*, *Marine Corps Service Campaign Plan*, *Marine Corps Campaign Support Plan*, and Marine component commands' *Campaign Support Plans* share the way the Marine Corps will accomplish its tasks: persistent forward naval engagement. MCMS 2025 is the principal strategic planning document for the Marine Corps. In it, the Marine Corps of the future will "execute persistent forward engagement and security cooperation activities" as part of the relevant and timely capabilities the Marine Corps will bring to accomplish a wide range of combatant commander



tasks.<sup>10</sup> "Persistent forward naval engagement . . . shaping the operational environment and contributing to the prevention of conflict" is identified as the first of six Marine Corps core competencies.<sup>11</sup> Also, "expand persistent forward presence and engagement" is the third of 10 prioritized *MCMS 2025* Service objectives.<sup>12</sup>

The *MOC*, which provides a conceptual guide for current and future force development and experimentation, states that the Marine Corps is organized, trained, and equipped to operate at and from the sea as part of the naval team to "engage, respond, and project."<sup>13</sup> It devotes an entire chapter to "Engagement: Forward Presence and Engagement to Prevent Crisis, Build Partnerships and Relationships, and Assure Access."<sup>14</sup> The *Marine Corps Service Campaign Plan* outlines how the Marine Corps will develop its forces to maintain or reestablish its core competencies to meet CCDR requirements and posture the Marine Corps for the future. For example, it describes how the Corps conducts persistent forward naval engagement and is always prepared to respond as the Nation's expeditionary force-in-readiness.<sup>15</sup> The *Marine Corps Campaign Support Plan* articulates how the Marine Corps supports the attainment of the global and strategic end states specified in the *GEF*. It also identifies the Marine Corps contribution to GCC TCPs in order to support attainment of national strategic objectives.<sup>16</sup> Marine Forces' *Campaign Support Plans* describe how Marine component commands and the Marine Corps support the achievement of respective GCC TCP objectives.<sup>17</sup> The Marine Corps will execute persistent forward naval engagement as one of the ways to accomplish its tasks. SC is a means for the Marine Corps to engage with foreign defense establishments.

Well, so what? Beginning with the *GEF* and evidenced by subordinate planning guidance, a paradigm shift has occurred in the way the DoD, military departments, and Services conceptualize, plan, develop, and execute

to achieve security and defense objectives. Conceptually, engagement and partnerships are part of an expanded view of defending the homeland, winning the long war, promoting security, deterring conflict, and winning our Nation's wars. Planning is strategy-centric, shaping the environment, and setting conditions for success. The DoD now develops capabilities to improve its ability to build partnerships. The DoD, GCCs, military departments, and the Marine Corps execute SC as part of steady-state foundational activities and during contingencies.

In summary, strategic, defense, and

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***SCETC, as a SC-enabling organization, provides SC planning education and support, in addition to other tasks.***

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military guidance identify engagement, partnerships, strategy-centric planning, steady-state shaping, cooperative relationships, and persistent forward naval engagement as ways to achieve national security and defense objectives. SC, by definition, is a primary means to accomplish these objectives.

SCETC, as a SC-enabling organization, provides SC planning education and support, in addition to other tasks. The SCETC-sponsored SC Planners Course provides SC planners with a functional knowledge of guidance, policies, doctrine, planning, assessments, resources, tools, processes, and procedures to facilitate the achievement of theater objectives. SCETC also conducts Service-level assessments and analysis of partner-nation security forces that feed into long-term SC engagement plans in support of Marine Forces' *Campaign Support Plan* objectives.

**Notes**

1. Director, Joint Staff, *Point Publication 01-2, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms 2001*, as amended through September 2010, Washington, DC, September 2010, p. 416.
2. President of the United States, *NSS 2010*, Washington, DC, May 2010, p. 11-12.
3. Secretary of Defense (SecDef), *QDR Report 2010*, Washington, DC, February 2010, pp. 17, 26, 57, and 73.
4. SecDef, *NDS 2008*, Washington, DC, June 2008, pp. 13-17.
5. Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), *NMS 2004*, Washington, DC, 2004, pp. 7-8.
6. SecDef, *GEF 2008*, Washington, DC, 2008.
7. CJCS, *JSCP 2008*, Washington, DC, 2008.
8. CJCS, *DPPG 2008*, Washington, DC, 2008.
9. Chief of Naval Operations, Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC), Commandant of the Coast Guard, *CS-21*, Washington, DC, October 2007, p. 9.
10. CMC, *MCMS 2025*, Washington, DC, 2008, p. 6.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 12-13.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
13. Deputy Commandant, Combat Development and Integration, *MOC*, Third Edition, Marine Corps Combat Development Command (MCCDC), Quantico, June 2010, p. 6.
14. *MOC*, p. 53-76.
15. Headquarters Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Service Campaign Plan*, Washington, DC, 2010.
16. Headquarters Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Campaign Support Plan*, Washington, DC, 2010.
17. Marine Forces, *Campaign Support Plans*, written based on guidance requirements to support the geographic CCDRs.

